

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 are pending. The specification and claim 1 are amended. The specification is amended to correct minor informalities noted upon applicants' review. Claim 1 is amended to set forth tension varying means (See page 10, lines 13 and 14, for example).

Claims 1, 3, 5 and 6 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Hase et al. in view of Kerr et al. Favorable reconsideration of this rejection is earnestly solicited.

In the rejection, the Examiner acknowledges that Hase et al. does not specifically teach that greater tension is applied to the laminate during delamination of the protective film than after the passage between the metal rolls. Kerr et al. is applied by the Examiner for allegedly rendering this feature obvious. The Examiner states that "rollers 30 and 32 that tension the carrier sharply around the stripper bar to strip the carrier from the laminate" as allegedly providing the teachings which Hase et al. lacks.

Hase et al. teaches that "since a difference in coefficient of elongation between the copper foil and the polyimide film causes the laminate to be destroyed by tension applied at the time of the bonding step, it is preferable that the tension be reduced to such a minimum extent that the materials make stable progress". Thus, Hase et al. completely fails to teach "greater tension being applied to the laminate during the delamination of the protective film than after the passage between the metal rolls". Kerr et al. fails to provide the teachings which Hase et al. lacks.

Kerr et al. is not arranged so as to press the laminate tightly between both sides. As such, tension can not be changed during the passage through the stripper bar 40, so that greater tension

can not be applied to the laminate during the delamination of the carrier sheet 22 than after the passage between the rollers 16 and 18. More specifically, the stripper bar 40 of Kerr et al. is provided so as to intensively increase tension around the stripper bar 40 and thereby stably delaminate the carrier sheet 22.

Accordingly, even if Kerr et al. is combined with Hase et al. so as to delaminate the protective film from the flexible laminate, the laminate is pulled before being sufficiently cooled and is distorted to develop appearance defects, or the tension on the flexible laminate during delamination is so low as to cause creases and other defects in the appearance of the flexible laminate.

Furthermore, even if the tension on the carrier sheet 22 is changed during the passage through the stripper bar 40, the stripper bar 40 is arranged so as to press the laminate only from the side of the carrier sheet 22 so that the tension on the receiver stock 24 is not changed. Accordingly, Kerr et al. completely fails to teach or suggest that greater tension is applied to the laminate during the delamination of the carrier sheet 22 than after passage between the rollers 16 and 18.

Claim 2 was rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Hase et al. and Kerr et al. further in view of Freeman et al. Freeman fails to provide the teachings which Hase et al. and Kerr et al. lack, as discussed above.

Claim 4 was rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Hase et al. and Kerr et al. and further in view of Yamamoto et al. Yamamoto et al. also fails to provide the teachings which Hase et al. and Kerr et al. lack.

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Draft Amendment
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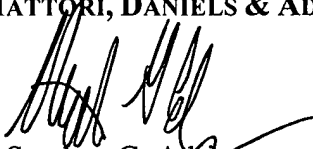
For at least the foregoing reasons, the claimed invention distinguishes over the cited art and defines patentable subject matter. Favorable reconsideration is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action by applicants would be desirable to place the application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone applicants' undersigned attorney.

If this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen G. Adrian', is written over the printed name.

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